

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL BELIZE IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 266237

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GT, BH

SUBJECT: GUATEMALA/BELIZE

REFERENCE: LONDON 17159

1. EMBASSY LONDON URGED TO MAKE MAXIMUM EFFORT, PRIOR
TO FINAL DECISIONS ON OPTIONS PAPER REFERRED TO BY FCO
DUFF (REFTEL) TO CONVINCE UK OF FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. ANY UK MOVE TO REASSURE GOG THAT ALL IS NOT LOST, AND
THUS REDUCE PRESENT LIKELIHOOD OF KNEE-JERK MILITARY
REACTION, WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY HAVE TO BE TAKEN
BEFORE PASSAGE OF UN RESOLUTION. WAITING UNTIL AFTERWARDS
MAY VERY WELL BE TOO LATE; EVENTS MAY THEN BE IN THE
SADDLE.

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B. KISSINGER TO CALLAGHAN LETTER FORESAW TWO DISTINCT POSSIBILITIES: (1) PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT, AND (2) PRIVATE UNDERSTANDING. WE AWARE THE FIRST WOULD, BY ITS NATURE, HAVE TO BE VERY BROAD AND GENERAL, WHILE SECOND COULD BE MORE SPECIFIC. TO HAVE DESIRED IMPACT EITHER SHOULD BE WORKED OUT BEFOREHAND WITH GOG PROBABLY AT UN (SEE BELOW). IDEAL COMBINATION WOULD BE BOTH, BUT EITHER, CAREFULLY NEGOTIATED, COULD BE HELPFUL.

C. UK PUBLIC STATEMENT WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE PRIOR TO OR ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH UN VOTE TO HAVE ANY REAL IMPACT. WHILE HEADY ATMOSPHERE OF UN AND FEAR OF EMBARRASSMENT VIS-A-VIS THIRD WORLD SUPPORTERS MIGHT POSSIBLY MAKE PRICE RELUCTANT TO AGREE TO PUBLIC STATEMENT BEFORE VOTE, STATEMENT WOULD LOSE IMPACT RAPIDLY (PARTICULARLY IN GUATEMALA) IF DELAYED. ALSO, ALTHOUGH THERE MAY BE PROBLEMS IN GETTING PRICE INTO A REASONABLE FRAME OF MIND IN NEW YORK, THE CHANCES SEEM EVEN HEAVIER AGAINST DOING SO IN BELIZE, PARTICULARLY AFTER OVERWHELMING UN VOTE IN FAVOR OF QUOTE HIS UNQUOTE RESOLUTION. IF BRITISH FEEL THEY ARE UNABLE TO MAKE A PUBLIC STATEMENT BEFORE THE VOTE THEN WE BELIEVE A PRIVATE GOG-UK (PLUS BELIZE?) UNDERSTANDING ALONG LINES OF THE KISSINGER TO CALLAGHAN LETTER, WHICH IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE IN ANY EVENT, BECOMES ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE BELIEVE THAT SUGGESTION BY DUFF OF NEGOTIATING WITH GOG NOW THE POSSIBILITIES FOR FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS IS EXCELLENT IDEA. HOWEVER, THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE SOMETHING MORE THAN A QUOTE EXPLORATORY MISSION UNQUOTE AS WE UNDERSTAND THAT TERM. THE MISSION WOULD HAVE TO BE PREPARED TO REACH SOME SPECIFIC AGREEMENTS.

D. PRESENCE OF BELIZEAN DELEGATION IN NEW YORK, INCLUDING LEADERS OF OPPOSITION, WOULD SEEM TO PRESENT PROMISING SITUATION FOR UK. IF THAT DELEGATION AS A WHOLE CAN BE BROUGHT TO SEE URGENT NECESSITY OF SOME ACTION ALONG THE LINES OF KISSINGER TO CALLAGHAN LETTER, WEAKENING OF PRICE'S POSITION DISCUSSED REFTEL NEED NOT OCCUR. INDEED, IT SEEMS TO US HIS POSITION WOULD BE STENGTHENED, SINCE OPPOSITION WOULD BE CO-OPTED ON THIS HIGH PRIORITY AND
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ALMOST SOLE ISSUE IN BELIZEAN POLITICAL LIFE. ADDITIONAL, ABILITY OF UK TO ASSURE GUATEMALA THAT BELIZEANS, INCLUDING OPPOSITION, ARE ON BOARD ON WHATEVER PROPOSALS UK PUTS FORWARD, WOULD GREATLY STRENGTHEN THEIR MOLLIFYING EFFECT ON GOG. (FYI REPORTING OFFICERS' COMMENTS REPORTED REFTEL RE QUOTE BELIZEAN TAIL WAGGING BRITISH DOG UNQUOTE APPEAR TO US TO BE VERY WELL TAKEN.)

E. REGARDING POSSIBLE SUBMISSION OF THE DISPUTE TO THE ICJ, OUR OWN BELIEF IS THAT MOLINA'S REPLY TO RICHARD ABOUT NOT BEING AUTHORIZED TO AGREE WAS A PERFECTLY STRAIGHT AND LITERAL ANSWER AND MEANT EXACTLY WHAT IT SAID. REQUEST YOU PASS THIS TO DUFF, TO HELP CLARIFY UK THINKING ON THIS IMPORTANT POINT. YOU SHOULD ADD THAT OTHER CONVERSATIONS WE HAVE HAD WITH MOLINA LEAD US TO BELIEVE THAT GUATEMALA COULD ACCEPT THE ICJ ALTHOUGH NOT WITHOUT SOME HARD BARGAINING ON TERMS OF SUBMISSION.

EMBASSY GUATEMALA'S COMMENTS REQUESTED. FYI: WE DO NOT FOLLOW DUFF'S ARGUMENT THAT PRICE IS GOING TO BE EASIER TO CONVINCE ON THIS POINT OR ANY OF THE OTHERS AFTER PASSAGE OF A HIGHLY FAVORABLE RESOLUTION THAN HE WILL BE RIGHT NOW. WE REGARD THIS AS DUBIOUS.

2. USUN BEING INSTRUCTED TO ABSTAIN ON BOTH RESOLUTIONS. YOU MAY SO ADVISE UK. KISSINGER

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